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ABSTRACT

This document investigates the extent, degrees, and educational implications of the dogmatism of Indian teacher educators. The study is reported to have involved 126 teacher educators in the state of Rajasthan who filled out the Dogmatic Scale (E form) by Rokeach. The document discusses the scores as to general distribution of scale scores, veteran/novice differences, educational level differences, and differences among India, the United States, and the United Kingdom. Tables are included in the text. It is concluded that the sample teacher educators proved to be exceedingly dogmatic and held attitudes inconsistent with the requirements of educational reforms implicit and inherent in the Indian democratic constitution. This conclusion, it is stated, implies that there will be difficulties in improving the nation's education. (JA)

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Dogmatism of Indian Teacher Educators

"One of the most important aims," write the authors of Secondary Education Commission Report (5), "that should consciously inspire their (teachers) educational ideals and techniques is that an individual must form his own independent judgement on all kinds of complicated social, economic and political issues and, to a large extent decide his own course of action." In keeping with this democratic Zeitgeist the teachers' colleges tried to shape and fashion their plans and programs accordingly. But all these plans and programs however laudable, will be an exercise in futility unless the teacher educators, who are the key figures in guiding these programs, have a firm belief in "an open mind, receptive to the new ideas and not confined within the prison walls of out-moded customs, traditions and beliefs"(5). In the light of the above observations it was the purpose of this small study to provide evidence relating to the following questions:

1. What is the extent of the dogmatism of Indian teacher educators?
2. Are veteran teachers educators more dogmatic than fledglings?
3. Are there significant sex differences between teacher educators on a measure of dogmatism?
4. Do teacher educators with higher educational qualifications differ significantly in the extent of dogmatism from those who have lower qualifications?
5. Do Indian teacher educators differ significantly in the extent of their dogmatism from similar other groups in the United States and the United Kingdom?
6. What are the implications of the findings of this study in the field of teacher education in India?

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Procedure

Sample

The sample teacher educators were one hundred twenty six belonging to the State of Rajasthan in each of the seventeen teacher education colleges of this State. Of the seventeen colleges three are postgraduate, while one conducts, besides the one year programs, a four year teacher education program also. The other fourteen are graduate teachers' colleges of education. The sample included 106 males and 20 females with a mean age of 36.62 years, (S.D., 7.08). These 126 Ss constituted nearly 70 percent of the total number of teacher educators in the various teachers' colleges. Their socio-economic status was, in general, middle class and their educational qualifications were M.A., B.Ed. 47, M.A., M.Ed., 75; B.A., M.Ed., 2; and B.A., Ph.D., 2. Their teaching experience ranged from 0-15 years and above, with a mean of 11.21 years (S.D. = 7.75).

Instrument

The Dogmatic Scale (E form) by Rokeach (7) was mailed to the staff members of some colleges while in others it was administered by the investigatory himself. This scale consists of 40 statements concerned with the various aspects of a subjects' beliefs ranging from items related to political beliefs to those dealing with beliefs about oneself. The subject rates his agreement or disagreement along a six-point scale from I agree very much to I disagree very much. Responses on the Scale were computed according to the directions given by Rokeach. The total score reflects the openness or closeness of a subjects' belief systems.

Results

Data regarding the reliability, means and standard deviation of the Dogmatic Scale scores of the 126 sampleteacher educators are presented in Table 1.

Insert Table 1 about here

The split-half reliability coefficient corrected by the Spearman-Brown Formulea for the total scale comes to .83.

General Distribution of Scale Scores

The relevant entries in Table 1 indicate that the Dogmatism Scale scores range from 116 to 225, with a mean of 181.28 and an S.D. of 26.54. An inspection of the actual frequency distribution shows that a significant percentage of nearly 60 teacher educators have scores between 176 and 255; and it is only 10 percent of the teacher educators who score below the theoretical mean of 140. The distribution is markedly skewed b in the negative direction, warranting the inference that the sample teacher educators are, in general, located on the more dogmatic side of the response continuum.

Veteran - Novice Differences

The 27 notive teacher educators (with four years and less of training college experience) were compared with the 60 veterans (defined here as those with ten years and more of college experience). The difference between their mean scores (Table 2) was 4.36 which is not significant at

Insert Table 2 about here

.05 level of confidence, (t = 0.77). An important point to note is that the correlations between dogmatism scores and years of experience and age were not significant at all.

Male - Female Differences

The mean difference in the dogmatism scores of the 106 male and 20 female teacher educators was 18.44 (Table 2). This difference far exceeds the criterion level of significance (.05) set up in this study (t = 3.01). Again an important fact to note is that the female teacher educators as a group are more constricted in the range of their scores (166-255), and in their internal variability (S.D. = 24.32) as compared with the male teacher educators (range 116-225; S.D. = 28.76).

Educational level Differences

It will be recalled that the total sample on whom the Dogmatism Scale was administered was 126. Only 122 could be grouped into two distinct categories: 47 M.A., / M.Sc., B.Ed., and 75 M.A.,/M.Sc., M.Ed. The difference between the Dogmatism Scale scores of the two groups is 3.86 only, which is statistically nonsignificant (t = .68). A commonsense assumption would warrant the fact that higher education on the part of 75 M.Ed. teacher educators would result into greater flexibility, open - mindedness and less of "opinionation". But this is not so. The only explanation that can be offered is that the difference between the educational levels of the two groups is only one year's study and instruction at a teachers' college level; however, further research is needed to verify the results.

Indian - U.S, U.K Differences

It is clear from Table (3) that the group mean scores of this

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Insert Table 3 about here

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scale was 181.3 (S.D.= 26.54). This is considerably greater than all the sample means gathered by Rokeach and his associates in various settings, excepting the VA Domiciliary and the English workers. The differences between the Indian group and the English and VA groups alone are not significant (t = 1.3 and .05, respectively). The conclusion that the Indian teacher educators group is less open minded than other samples in U S and U K does not seem to be untenable.

Discussion

The Dogmatism Scale (form E) administered to the 126 teacher educators in the State of Rajasthan, India, shows that the measure has a sufficient reliability of this population. The total mean scores indicate clearly that the sample teacher-educators are more dogmatic in comparison with almost similar samples on whom the E Scale has been

administered except, of course, the American institutionalized veterans and the English workers. Rokeach (7) ascribes this phenomenon to the fact that "the workers and veterans, because of less education or senility or demoralization, generally agree more with statements presented to them." Again the mean dogmatism score of theEnglish college students is higher because of the presence of a small number of Communists who score higher than other political groups. The present sample of teacher educators cannot be"accused" of any "yes-saying" tendency or the presence of Communists because perhaps Communism has not made any significant inroads in the community of the teacher educators of this country. The explanation lies in the fact that "most of man's cognitive activity is also highly social in nature, depending upon some external check against the cognition or beliefs of others. Thinking inside the head often takes place within a social system that can effect processes inside the head" (7). The "social system" in which the Indian teacher educators live and have their being is tradition oriented, petrifying and authoritarian and "ideologically nearer to Fascism than realized by a few." (8). Has Garstairs (5), a Western psychologist, with an unusual experience of Indian society a point when he writes, that the old system puts a premium on conformity at the expense of personal initiative, the individual achieves integration and stability in his life habits by adhering to the pattern of his enveloping society, rather than asserting his own personality. In short,cocooned in a sanctioned behaviour which is the dominant trait of tradition hardly leaves for the individual any choice of alternative which is the crux of openmindedness, an increasing tolerance for ambiguity, independence and dissent. Incidentally, the high scores of the Dogmatism Scale in an authoritarian Indian culture may be taken as an evidence for the validity of this scale.

The veteran teacher educators, as a group, are not exceedingly more dogmatic than the novice teacher educators. This phenomenon is in agreement with Rabkin's (6) conclusions but in conflict with Soderbergh's(9)

speculations who concluded that "some veteran public school teachers are exceedingly dogmatic." In short, the suspicion that "arteries and opinions harden pari passu" does not seem to hold much water. It is not ageing, perhaps but the influence of traditional conservatism that afflicts the teacher educators making them intellectually immobile and resistent to change at all age brackets, uniformily.

The female teacher educators are highly dogmatic than the male teacher educators, primarily because they are traditionally the adjunct of man and very seldom rebel against being so. The only distinction that society recognises for them is conformity to custom. Cormack (2) has a point: "they (women) are in fact treated just like the untouchables and there is no sympathy involved in it." Again, women are required to be shy, eternally patient, modest and meek, always ready to obey and suffer. "A Hindu woman," writes Comaraswamy (1), "is given the opportunity to realize than express herself". In brief, as Milton (4) said, "He for God only, she for God in him." Under these circumstances if women were allowed to speculate, seek truth and evaluate it also, it might cause a grave injury to the conscience of the society and also endanger their security.

The comparatively low dogmatism scores of the U K and U S samples may be, perhaps, due to the complex technological advancement which brings about a change in men's modes of thought and habit systems. Yogendra Singh (10) observes: "in the behavioural matrix of the individual it introduces rationality and atomism....in the family, community and society it means a high sense of individualism."

There is no gainsaying the fact that the sample teacher educators, by and large, are exceedingly dogmatic and hold attitudes that are inconsistent with the requirements of the educational reforms that seem to be implicit and inherent in the Indian democratic constitution. If the key figures in the training institutions themselves are close-minded and doctrinaire what hope can one cherish about the improvement of education

in the nation's schools. The teacher educators have therefore to reflect: "If the salt loseth its savour, where with shall it be salted."

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Table 1

Reliability, Means, and S.D. of the Dogmatism Scale

Reliability	Mean	S.D.	Range	N
.85	181.28	22.54	116-255	126

Table 2

Summary of Means and t Ratios Between Different Groups Ordered by Length of Experience, Sex and Educational Experience

	N	Mean	t	P
Experience				
0-4 years	27	180.60	.77	n.s.
10 years and above	60	184.96		
Sex				
Males	106	172.06	3.01	.001*
Females	20	190.50		
Educational Qualifications**				
M.A., B.Ed.	47	179,35	.68	n.s.
M.A., M.Ed.	75	183.21		

* P = .05

** Four teacher educators could not be classified in these two categories.

Table 3

Dogmatic Scale Scores of Indian Teacher Educators and Others Groups

Group	N	Mean	S.D.	t+
* English Colleges	80	152.8	26.2	7.6
* English Workers	60	175.8	26.0	1.3
* Ohio State U. I	22	142.6	27.6	6.1
* Ohio State U. II	28	145.8	22.1	7.8
* Ohio State U. III	21	142.6	23.3	6.9
* Ohio State U. IV	29	141.5	27.8	7.0
* Ohio State U. V	58	141.3	23.2	9.1
* V.A. Domiciliary	80	185.2	26.6	0.5
** U. of Washington	107	132.2	22.5	15.3
Indian Tr. Educators	126	181.3	26.5	

* From Rokeach (1960)

** From Rabkin (Spring 1966) Journal of Teacher Education pp 47-49.

+ For difference of mean from Indian group. At greater than 1.96 is significant at .05 level of confidence.